

1893.

112

Fifth-day morning, 11th Mo. 16th 1893.
The meeting concluded at near the time
adjourned to.

Conv.

to

prepare

returning

minute

for

Isaac

Sharpe.

Saml R. Moore, John R. Cory
Richard H. Thomas, Elizabeth R. Hopkins
and Susan R. Mothurs were appointed
a Committee to prepare a returning
minute for our dear friend Isaac
Sharpe, for the Clerk to sign on our
behalf, expressing a sense of the
value of his services while in the
limits of our Yearly Meeting.

A summary of the exercises
during the other sessions of this meeting
was presented and read.

It was directed to be forwarded
to the Yearly Meeting.

It is as follows:

MINUTE OF ADVICE OF THE YEARLY MEETING ON MINIS-
TRY AND OVERSIGHT TO ITS SUBORDINATE
MEETINGS.

DEAR FRIENDS:—Our time is short. We must be about our Father's
business. The real influence we exert is determined by the secret atti-
tude of our souls toward the Lord, towards His work, and towards the
world. As we seek to understand more and more the character of our
Lord, and open our hearts to the influence of His spirit, our Christian
ideal of life and character becomes enlarged and nobler. If we are to
be successful in doing our share in evangelizing the world, we must
abide in Christ, so that we may be co-workers together with Him. We
are not to be mere machines, mere telephones, as it were, to convey His
messages to others. He gives us of His life, and we give ourselves to
Him, and the spiritual life of each is developed according to our indi-
vidual character. For when the Lord dwells in us, and purifies us, He
makes our individuality not a hindrance, but a help to our service.

113

1893

When the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, He gave us a perfect
revelation. But man's appreciation of it is still imperfect. Century by
century men have been learning more and more of God. In coming to
Him, we come into a life of constant progression, as we live in Him.

The Society of Friends has special difficulties, and also special privi-
leges. One of these privileges is that our ministers are not a special
class, but are in the midst of ordinary life. Men and women struggling
with the difficulties of everyday life are best helped by others who are
themselves in contact with similar difficulties. It is our privilege to
show forth how the Lord helps in these matters. In this age of thought
and unsettlement there is an open door for us, if we are faithful to the
ever-enlarging manifestations of the divine life.

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." The candle does not
make the light, but the candle is a means for showing forth the light.
Let us each so yield ourselves to the Lord, that the light from one may
overlap the light shed by the other; so that all who come anywhere
within our influence, may from some one of us receive light. In the
ordering of God, Jesus Christ does not save the world alone, but calls to
us to work with Him.

In seeking to help others, we must endeavor to understand their posi-
tion and character, and must not too strongly insist that the special
view we have taken is the only correct one. At the same time we must
be faithful to the light that has been given to us, and we must be care-
ful in what we allow ourselves to do, not to cast a stumbling block in
the way of others.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is for all, and is received by faith into the
obedient heart. There is no good reason therefore why we should lack
power in our life or service. We need not wait for special occasions of
blessing, but open our hearts now to the Lord.

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus is an overcoming Gospel. We are not
to be defeated, but saved. Through Jesus Christ we are saved from sin,
and our message to the world is that in Him all are to be set free
from the power of evil in their own hearts. Therefore let us preach
Jesus. Sermons are not to be essays or mere orations. The hope of
mankind is the Lord Jesus Christ. "Take heed to the ministry that
thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it." Ours should be a
consecrated, faithful, tender and a self-denying ministry.

We would solemnly lay upon our elders and overseers the responsi-
bility that has been laid upon them by the Lord and by the Church, and
we would refer them to the words of our Discipline (page 69), which are
as follows:

"We would encourage them (the elders and overseers) to cherish an
interest in the spiritual welfare of all their fellow-members; to exercise
a watchful care and affectionate oversight, and more especially to man-
ifest their sympathy with their younger Friends in the peculiar circum-
stances in which some of them may be placed, remembering the advice
of the Apostle, 'Feed the flock of God which is amongst you, taking
oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre,
but of a ready mind; neither as lords over God's heritage, but being ex-
amples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye
shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away'—(1 Peter v: 2, 3, 4).
Ministers, elders and overseers thus united in the love and fellowship of
the Gospel, become mutually useful to each other, and are so nursing
fathers and mothers in the Church."

On behalf of the Meeting,

JOSEPH P. ELLIOTT, Clerk.